PROVIDES MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTION ACTIVITIES. Understands need for prevention work; provides full range of prevention work; coordinates with other agencies to maximize use of resources that improve coping and resilience.

Frequency: Q1Y JIT: No P: Yes K: Yes

PROVIDES TRAINING ON SELF-CARE. Provides training in various settings that increases awareness of self-care activities that improve coping ability and resiliency.

Frequency: Q1Y JIT: No P: Yes K: Yes

UNDERSTANDS MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS NEEDED ON DEPLOYMENTS. Knows full range of coping and mental health problems that present on deployments; knows appropriate intervention(s) for predictable coping and mental health problems.

Frequency: Q1Y JIT: No P: No K: Yes

PROMOTES MENTAL HYGIENE. Instructs line and medical personnel on techniques fro recognizing delaying, and coping with the emotional and autonomic responses of combat stress. This material will include stress management, communications skills, relaxation techniques, the dangers of substance abuse and boredom, the role of combat leadership and other topics as required.

Frequency: Q1Y JIT: No P: No K: Yes

DEALING WITH BOREDOM

Colonel Alice Tarpley
Chief Consultant to the Surgeon General
for Clinical Social Work
Andrews AFB MD

“ONLY BORING PEOPLE GET BORED”

Author

Unknown

FACTORS RESTRICTING ACTIVITIES

- Acceptable activities will be driven by
  - mission demands
  - security risks
  - resource constraints
  - cultural restrictions

CONSEQUENCES OF BOREDOM

- Higher rate of injury (attention)
- Increased behavioral problems
- Increased substance use
- Lower morale

LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION

Mental health personnel can advise leadership in avenues to prevent consequences of boredom.

- Everyone needs a job
- Work discipline would be emphasized
- In low OPS tempo areas, recreation opportunities should be a priority
- Tiger teams can help identify creative “outside the box” outlets

WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS

- Encourage goal setting around some of the following areas
  - Learn a new skill
    - foreign language
    - crafts
    - work related tasks

WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS (cont'd)

- Establish new and nurture old relationships
  - initiate contacts through "Dear Any Servicemember" letters
  - ensure regular, meaningful communication with friends and loved ones at home
  - meet or get to know individuals at site
- Identify weight or fitness goals
  - start exercise plan
  - try new fitness activities

WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS

(cont'd)

- Work on projects
  - make something
  - build a bunker
  - do PME
- Develop a legacy for future
  - capture experiences (pictures, journal, scrapbook)
  - identify lessons learned as they happen

WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS (cont'd)

- Take care of others
  - spend time with peers who are having difficulties
  - visit patients in hospital
  - do something special for others (remember a birthday, surprise a nightshift with a treat)
- Improve camp life
  - help organize a special event
  - build a gathering place

WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS

(cont'd)

- Do some of the things you always wished you had time to do
  - enjoy the sun (or the snow, or the rain)
  - spend time listening to music
  - attend movies in the movie tent
  - read for fun
  - attend a class
  - write a story

SUMMARY

- Excessive boredom is preventable
- Mental health personnel serve in an essential leadership consultation role which can lead to establishment or reinforcement of meaningful activities

EXERCISE